

VZCZCXYZ0008  
PP RUEHWEB

DE RUEHEG #6308 2840906  
ZNY CCCCC ZZH  
P 110906Z OCT 06  
FM AMEMBASSY CAIRO  
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 1930  
INFO RUEHXX/ARAB ISRAELI COLLECTIVE  
RUEHBY/AMEMBASSY CANBERRA 0024  
RUEHWL/AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON 0013  
RUEHGV/USMISSION GENEVA 0323

C O N F I D E N T I A L CAIRO 006308

SIPDIS

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 10/11/2016  
TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [UNGA](#) [PHUM](#) [KTIA](#) [EG](#)  
SUBJECT: EGYPT UNDECIDED ON UN DECLARATION ON RIGHTS OF  
INDIGENOUS PEOPLES

REF: A. STATE 169257

[1](#)B. HEGADORN-ASWAD 10/10/06 E-MAIL  
[1](#)C. CAIRO 3756

Classified by ECPO Counselor Catherine Hill-Herndon for  
reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

[1](#)1. (C) With the Australian Charge in the lead, poloff delivered reftel demarche on October 10 to MFA Human Rights Office Deputy Director Mai Khalil, describing U.S. concerns over the draft UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (DRIP). Khalil shared that internal GOE deliberation on the subject among Egyptian Ministry of Justice and Ministry of Foreign Affairs legal experts continued, with no decision reached.

[1](#)2. (C) Discussing reftel demarche's assertion that a vote on the Declaration could come as early as the week of October 16 before the UN General Assembly, Khalil asked for additional clarification on the UN schedule and inquired whether the Declaration would first be debated within the Third Committee before a vote before the full UNGA plenary. Poloff shared in a follow-up conversation with Khalil on October 11 that there is some confusion over procedures regarding consideration of the DRIP, but that the Third Committee might vote on the Declaration as early as the week of the 16th. If raised at the UNGA plenary, a November vote was possible (ref B).

[1](#)3. (C) After hearing the substance of Australian, New Zealand (NZ does not yet have an Embassy in Cairo), and USG objections to the present draft of the DRIP and the current Chair's handling of the issue, Khalil said Egypt did not have particularly strong views on the debate since it was not a member of the UN Council on Human Rights (UNCHR) and since "we consider all Egyptians to be indigenous." Nonetheless, Egypt's position would be guided strongly by the African Group's consensus position, she said. Reading from a report sent by Egypt's Mission in Geneva, Khalil noted that such consensus appeared lacking, since out of the 13 African members of the UNCHR, 5 abstained and 3 failed to vote when the declaration was adopted in June. While suggesting the issue was a low priority for the GOE, Khalil hinted at her Department's negative views on the draft's self-determination language, and suggested that the Declaration could be "delayed" within the Third Committee.  
JONES